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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MAKSHARIP AUSHEV'S FAMILY APPRECIATES POSTHUMOUS
STATE DEPARTMENT HONOR

REF: MOSCOW 2653

Classified By: Acting Minister Counselor for Political Affairs David Ko
stelancik; reasons 1.4(b/d).

11. (C) The family of Maksharip Aushev greatly appreciates the December 10 post-humous awarding of the State Department's 2009 Human Rights Defender award to the slain Ingush opposition figure. Unknown assailants murdered Aushev in the northern Caucasus republic of Kabardino-Balkaria on October 25. One of the family's attorneys, Musa Pliyev (currently in Washington with Ingush opposition leader Magomed Khazbiyev), told us December 10 that he had spoken with Aushev's father Yahya that morning when Russian media announced the award and that the elder Aushev expressed the family's gratitude for the award.

12. (SBU) This is the second posthumous award for Aushev in as many days. At a ceremony on December 8, Russian Federation Human Rights Ombudsman Vladimir Lukin bestowed a similar "human rights defender" award on Aushev at his annual "Hasten to do Good" event held to commemorate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As part of the ceremony Lukin played a video that included Aushev's final interview with Russia's REN-TV, and called Aushev a "fearless fighter for the rights of ordinary Ingush suffering from extralegal kidnappings and torture." Announcement of the award was carried already the morning of December 10 on a few Russian websites in conjunction with additional reporting on his award in Russia. Post will report further Russian media coverage as it appears.
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